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**Aging and Disabilities mobile unit provides
'one stop shopping' for Lee County folks**

By GEE ATKINSON

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*Lee County Observer, Bishopville,
S.C.*

Now Lee County senior citizens, caregivers and those with disabilities don't have to make numerous trips to take care of business.

Thanks to a program developed by the Lieutenant Governor's Office on Aging, all of the offices are coming to you.

The Aging and Disability Resource Center is a "one stop shop for aging and disability information."

And it's in Bishopville at the DSS office on Hospital Square two times every month.

"We're in Bishopville the second and fourth Wednesday of each month," says Joe Perry, an information and referral specialist with Santee Lynches Regional Council of Governments, the agency administering the mobile program.

Perry and Edna Robinson, an aging program assistant, travel on the mobile unit, which is a roomy RV they use as their office.

"We can do anything here that we can do in an office downtown," Robinson said. "We're an information resource center and we can help you decide which agency can best help you meet your needs."

Perry said the mobile unit provides resources for the elderly, their caregivers and adults with disabilities.

"We can help you find information on Medicare/Medicaid, medication assistance, living wills, caregiver supports, food programs, housing, health and rehabilitation ser-

vices, legal information and

much more," he said. "Without the mobile unit you'd have to spend a lot of time visiting a lot of different agencies and filling out a lot of paperwork each time. We're truly one-stop shopping."

ADRCs create a single, coordinated system of information and access for seniors and adults with physical disabilities seeking longterm care by minimizing confusion, enhancing individual choice and supporting informed decision-making, Robinson said.

"What we do is streamline the process," she said. "We're a single point of entry to public longterm support services and we make sure that consumers

understand their choices."

The counselors on the ADRC can make immediate

referrals to different agencies. "So you don't have to pull out the same paperwork over and over and answer the same questions."

The program kicked off in December and Perry said they are still working on a schedule of stops. "We want people to know we're out here and our services are available," he said.

Charles Dinkins drives the RV but says he's learned a lot about the program in the few weeks it's been operating.

"I've seen the benefits it offers," he said. "Sometimes all the paperwork is overwhelming. Don't know where to start? Start here with the Santee Lynches Aging and Disabilities Resource Center."

Debbie Bartholoma is the program coordinator for human services at Lee County DSS.

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This is only the second mobile unit in the state in service so we feel very fortunate," she said. "We're very excited about the ser-

vices it provides for our clients. It can save them trips to so many different places by setting up so much in one spot."

Bartholoma said there is also a website people can use to locate aging and adult

use to locate aging and adult disability services in their community.

"You can use the website, which is www.scaaccesshelp.org or you can call Santee Lynches at 803-775-7381 or toll free 800-948-1042," she said.

Santee Lynches ADRCs serve Clarendon, Lee, Kershaw and Sumter counties.



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Edna Robinson, an aging program assistant, and Joe Perry, an information and referral specialist with Santee Lynches COG, work on the computer in the Aging and Disabilities Resource Center, which is a mobile unit that visits Bishopville twice a month.



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Perry and Robinson stand beside the mobile unit which is in Bishopville at the Lee County DSS office the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month.